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SENATE BILL 304
By Dixon

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AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 50, relative to health screening of children.

WHEREAS, requiring vision screening for children before entry into kindergarten, preschool, nursery school or child care would increase the opportunities to diagnose vision disease and injury and permit early treatment; and

WHEREAS, use of vision screening at the time a child begins the third grade provides the optimal opportunity to diagnose and treat myopia ("nearsightedness"); and

WHEREAS, providing early preventive vision care for children increases their overall health, productiveness, and potential as good citizens, and is thus also cost effective for the state of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-5001, is amended by adding the following in subsection (b)(1), after the language "by subsection (a)" and before the punctuation ".":

, and provided with a vision screening by an appropriate medical provider

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-5001, is amended by adding the words "and vision screening" after the words "proof of immunization" in subdivision (c)(1) and in subsection (d).

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-5001(b)(2), is amended by deleting the word "and" after the words "such immunization" and before the words "other preventive measures" and by substituting instead the word "or".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-5001(c)(2), is amended by adding the words "or provided a vision screening" after the words "not been immunized" and before the words "due to medical", and by adding the words "or vision screening" after the words "from such immunization" and before the punctuation ".".

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-5001, is further amended by adding the "or vision screening" in subsection (e) after the words "Any immunization" and after the words "such immunization".

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-5001, is further amended by adding the following as new subsections (f) and (g) and by renumbering the current subsection (f) accordingly:

(f) Schools are encouraged to make reasonable efforts to apprise parents of the health benefits of obtaining a vision screening for children within six (6) months of the date set for school admission to the third grade.

(g) Vision screening, for purposes of this section, is a screening test recommended by a nationally recognized professional medical organization, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Ophthalmology or American Optometric Association.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.